

Anwar Saputra Waruwu, Tengku Silvina Sinar, Rohani Ganie: The Analysis Of Vocatives In The Poem Of The Cobra-King And The Frog-King

## THE ANALYSIS OF VOCATIVES IN THE POEM OF THE COBRA-KING AND THE FROG-KING

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**Abstract:** *This thesis entitled “VOCATIVES FOUND THE POEM OF THE COBRA-KING AND THE FROG-KING” is a study about vocatives in The Poem of The Cobra-King and The Frog-King. The aim of this study is to find out the functions of vocatives and types of vocatives also to find out the most dominant function and type of vocatives in The Poem of The Cobra-King and The Frog-King. The main theory used in supporting this study is a theory of vocatives as proposed by Zwicky (1974) and Bungin (2005). To support this study, the researcher employed a descriptive qualitative method since the data of this study are in the form of text. The result of this study indicates that there are two functions of vocatives found in this poem, such as Calls and Addresses. There are four types of vocatives found in this poem, namely Vocative that describes jobs, Vocative in the use of certain social words, Vocative based on characteristics and identity of the interlocutors, and Vocative based on the group of the interlocutors. The most dominant function of vocative found in this poem is the Addresses function that occurs 90 times or 80.36%, followed by Calls that occurs 22 times or 19.64%. While the most dominant type of vocative found is vocative in the use of social words became the most dominant types that occurs 85 times or 75.89% then followed by vocative based on the characteristics and identity of the interlocutors occurs 21 times or 18.75 %, vocative that describes jobs occurs 3 times or 2.67% and the last vocative based on the group of interlocutors occurs 3 times or 2.67 %.*

**Keywords:** *Systemic Functional Linguistics, Vocatives, Poem, Function, and Type of Vocative*

**Abstrak:** *Skripsi ini berjudul “VOCATIVES FOUND THE POEM OF THE COBRA-KING AND THE FROG-KING” merupakan kajian tentang vocatives dalam The Poem of The Cobra-King dan The Frog-King. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui fungsi vocatives dan jenis vocatives serta mengetahui fungsi dan jenis vocatives yang paling dominan dalam The Poem of The Cobra-King dan The Frog-King. Teori utama yang digunakan dalam mendukung penelitian ini adalah teori vocatives yang dikemukakan oleh Zwicky (1974) dan Bungin (2005). Untuk mendukung penelitian ini, peneliti menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif karena data penelitian ini berupa teks. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa ada dua fungsi vokal yang terdapat dalam puisi ini, yaitu Panggilan dan Alamat. Ada empat jenis Vokatif yang terdapat pada puisi ini, yaitu Vokatif yang menggambarkan pekerjaan, Vokatif dalam penggunaan kata-kata sosial tertentu, Vokatif berdasarkan karakteristik dan identitas*

*lawan bicaranya, dan Vokatif berdasarkan kelompok lawan bicaranya. Fungsi vokatif yang paling dominan terdapat pada puisi ini adalah fungsi Addresses yang muncul sebanyak 90 kali atau 80,36%, diikuti oleh Calls yang muncul sebanyak 22 kali atau 19,64%. Sedangkan jenis vokatif yang paling dominan ditemukan adalah vokatif dalam penggunaan kata-kata sosial menjadi jenis yang paling dominan terjadi sebanyak 85 kali atau 75.89% kemudian diikuti oleh vokatif berdasarkan karakteristik dan identitas lawan bicaranya terjadi sebanyak 21 kali atau 18,75%, vokatif yang muncul sebanyak 21 kali atau 18,75%. menjelaskan pekerjaan terjadi 3 kali atau 2,67% dan vokatif terakhir berdasarkan kelompok lawan bicara terjadi 3 kali atau 2,67%. **Kata kunci:** Linguistik Fungsional Sistemik, Vokatif, Puisi, Fungsi, dan Jenis Vokatif*

## A. Introduction

Vocatives is a form used for calling out and attracting or maintaining the addressee's attention by using a term referring to her/him. Zwicky (1974) points out that vocatives can express attitude, politeness, formality, status, intimacy or a role relationship and most of them mark the speaker as belonging to a sub-culture, social class or geographical dialect. The vocative is a dedicated nominal form used for calling out, attracting, or sustaining the addressee's attention: it names the addressee explicitly, by using a noun referring to her or him.

In this research, the writer is going to analyze vocatives found in "The Poem of The Cobra-King and The Frog-King" as the subject analysis which is a poem from Malay found in Manuscript KL. 161 in the library of the University of Leiden in Netherland. This manuscript already translated into English version. So, the writer will analyze the English version of this poem.

The reason to choose vocatives of "The Poem of The Cobra-King and The Frog-King" is to find out what are functions and types of vocatives used in the poem and to know what is the dominant function and type of vocative in this poem. Besides, writer want to help the reader to know the message from this poem by vocatives analysis. This study attempts to help the readers understand it more clearly.

## B. Discussion

There are two functions of vocatives and four types of vocatives found in The Poem of The Cobra-King and The Frog-king. The functions of vocative found in this poem are Calls and addresses and the types of vocatives found are vocative describes

jobs, vocative in the use of certain social words, vocative based on the characteristics and identity of the interlocutors and vocative based on the group of interlocutors.

1. *Gentlemen*, please do not get angry with your servant [f.12v]

In this sentence the cobra uses the word 'gentlemen' which refers to all the frog subjects in the kingdom. The type of vocative in this sentence is based on the group of interlocutors that is frogs.

2. *O lord*, illustrious king, your subjects are all your humble slaves [f.11r]

In this sentence the subjects called the Frog-King and said that they were all his servants. They used calls function in vocative to attract the attention of the Frog-King. Type of vocative in this sentence is use of certain social words which indicate the interactions that occur in the conversation, namely self-assessment of the interlocutor: which the subjects inferior to the Frog-King.

3. *My brother*, think about what your servant says. [f.6v]

The function of vocative in this sentence is calls. The type of vocative in this sentence is based on the characteristics or identity of the interlocutor, namely family relationship

4. Let your slave teach you a lesson, *my Lord*. [f.7r]

The cobra dedicates himself as a slave to the Frog-King. In the sentence above, found a vocative with addressses function. This vocative type is the use of certain social words that indicate the interactions that occur in conversation, namely self-assessment of the interlocutor: inferior

5. He begs your forgiveness, *most noble king*. [f.7v]

In this sentence the cobra humbles himself by using the word 'he' to describe himself. Then he called the king cobra the "most noble king" a compliment when we face a king. This phrase is a vocative which has addresses function and the type of vocative is based on the characteristics or identity of the interlocutor, namely personal character

6. We beg your forgiveness, *Your Royal Highness* [f.10v]

In the context of the situation, the subjects of the Frog-King convey to him the sentence above. They address the Frog-King with "Your Royal

Highness". This is a vocative which has a function as addresses with type vocative in the use of certain social words that indicate the interactions that occur in conversation, namely politeness, level of formality and also self-assessment of the interlocutor

In this analysis, addresses function occurs dominantly in the data (80.36%), then followed by calls function (19.64%). The dominant types of vocative found is the use certain social words (75.89%), then followed by based on characteristics and identity (18.75%), vocative that describe jobs (2.67%) and based on group of the interlocutors (2.67%).

### **C. Conclusion**

In this thesis, there are two functions of vocatives namely calls and addresses. There are four types of vocatives found in this thesis namely, vocative describes jobs, vocative in the use of certain social words, vocative based on the characteristics and identity of the interlocutors and vocative based on the group of interlocutors.

In the functions of vocatives, addresses function occurs 90 times or 80.36 %, it becomes the most dominant function in the data, successively followed by calls function that occurs 22 times or 19.64 %. While in types of vocatives, vocative in the use of social words became the most dominant types that occurs 85 times or 75.89% then followed by vocative based on the characteristics and identity of the interlocutors occurs 21 times or 18.75 %, vocative that describes jobs occurs 3 times or 2.67% and the last vocative based on the group of interlocutors occurs 3 times or 2.67 %.

So, from those data we can conclude that there are found two functions and four types of vocatives in the Poem of The Cobra-King and the Frog-King. The most dominant function found is addresses. While the most dominant type found is vocative in the use certain social words.

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## THE POEM OF THE COBRA-KING AND THE FROG-KING

[f.2r]

This is

the Poem of the Cobra-King and the Frog-King

---

Beseeching God for His help, please listen, sir,  
To this tale about the Cobra-King, that noble animal.  
Day and night he kept fretting and moping  
How he could bring about the ruin of the Frog.

That Cobra was an accomplished snake,  
Clever at disguising himself and deceiving,  
And his bite was poisonous beyond description.  
Once one had bitten, it was difficult to find an antidote

Then the Cobra, that perfect animal, had an idea:  
'Let's teach that Frog a lesson in true meaning!  
If I can deceive him, I will, by doing so,  
Humiliate all frogs!'

Once he had made up his mind the Cobra went on his way.  
When he found the King of the Frogs, that noble animal.



The many frogs who were jumped away hither and thither,  
Fearing that the Cobra had come to eat them.

[f.2v]

Speaking in a soft voice the Cobra said:

‘Gentlemen, please, do not be afraid.’

The Cobra sat down at the feet of His Majesty the King,  
While doing his obeisance and pressing his fingers together.

‘I beg your forgiveness, O accomplished King.

As for the reason why your slave has come to you, my lord,

It is that he wishes to put his fate into your hands

And faithfully carry out your commands every day’

When the Frog heard what the Cobra-King said,

He felt greatly pleased with his words

And said with a gracious mien:

‘We surrender to you all that We have.’

The Cobra felt pleased and his face lit up with a kind smile,

As he heard the words of the Frog-King,

While he thought to himself:

‘I have already succeeded in deceiving that frog.’

Thereupon the Cobra-King said to the frog,  
Gesticulating as he told him why he had come:  
‘It has already long been Our desire  
To teach you the magic of the holy pundits.’

‘The intention with which your servant has come to you  
Is to bring you a precious magic formula,  
So that We can teach it to Your Highness  
And all your subjects in the kingdom will be stricken with fear.’

‘But your servant does expect a little present in return,  
As a token that you are his student and he is your teacher.  
This magic can be studied without much pain  
And its study does not entail many requirements.’

[f.3r]

When the Frog heard his words he was all smiles.  
Clear were his thoughts now and he felt relieved:  
‘If such is the power of the magic formula  
Teach Us its words this very instant.’

‘If that’s what it is, Our subjects, too, will love Us

For We are descended from an ancient lineage.  
Even if treason has been committed, so what!  
May the curse from Macassar strike them all!’

‘Please, teach Us the formula  
And tell Us right away what you want in return,  
No matter how much it may be,  
So that We can grant you it.’

Feeling pleased the Cobra replied:  
‘The fee to be paid is not high, my lord;  
Just two frogs a day, that is all that is required.  
If you, my lord, will permit it, your slave will eat them as food.’

‘Is these conditions have been fulfilled,  
You are welcome to reside on Our head, my lord.  
Wherever you may go, your servant will also be with you  
And you will be seated on your throne for ever.’

When the Frog heard his words he said with a kindly smile on his face:  
‘If that is all you wish, my dear friend,  
Two frogs per day are nothing,  
We would grant you ten.’

The frog immediately drew near  
And stood on the head of the Cobra.  
Glaring to the left and glaring to the right,  
Shouting loudly he summoned his war-chiefs and ministers.

[f.3v]

He said: 'Hey, you, my ministers and officers,  
You there, just look at me now!  
Here I sit, carried aloft on the head of a cobra!  
Now my greatness exceeds that of all other rulers!'

'Is there anyone else who like me  
Can sit resting his elbows on the head of a cobra?  
From now on you had better as you are told,  
To avoid taking a beating from me.'

When his ministers and war-chiefs heard his words,  
They felt faint at heart:  
'Whatever may be the motive of our King, that venerable animal,  
We can only obey whatever he commands.'

The officers and ministers thought to themselves:  
'Our King, that noble animal, has already been deceived,

Having fallen under the spell of the Cobra, that war-like paladin.

Soon we will all his prisoners.'

Each one of them felt melancholy;

They were at their wit's end about to do,

When they considered that their king, that venerable animal,  
was not whit different from the cobra.

'Impossible that His Majesty behave like this?

Does he then have no sense of shame?

He does not for a moment consider it is ploy.

In the end we are sure all will be in utter confusion.'

[f.4r]

All did obeisance and said to him:

'It is fitting indeed that you, our lord, accomplished king,

Should let your beauty shine forth from the head of a cobra.

How people will fear you everywhere in the kingdom.'

When His Majesty heard this, he laughed with delight:

'Hey, you there, take heed of a thing or two!

If anyone of you disappoint me frequently,

I will treat him like I did all my Royal relatives.'

His senior minister spoke while doing obeisance  
To His Highness, God's Vicegerent on Earth:  
'What is the reason, my Lord, that you have had change of mind  
And have actually sworn an oath of loyalty with a cobra?'

'Your servant begs for your forgiveness for speaking thus.  
Please, Royal Highness, do not get angry with him.  
Is the Cobra, that fine animal, not an enemy?  
Then why, my Lord, do you his bidding?'

'For several years, months and days already  
Have you been ruler over this kingdom, my Lord,  
Yet you have never lost your temper when speaking to us,  
But now you have been taken in by the snake.'

'Humbly pressing my fingers together and resigning myself to God's Will  
I pray that these words of your servant may not be rejected.  
Your servant is a mere slave under your sandals;  
This Cobra is an animal full of wiles.'

'The Cobra has come to subject itself to you  
Speaking words that are soft and gentle  
And is pretending that he will be your teacher

In order that you, my Lord, will provide it with its food.'

[F.4v]

'Though your servant is a man of no consequence  
May you not curse him for the words he speaks.  
Your servant is not conjuring up some illusion;  
Ultimately your kingdom will be empty, my Lord.'

'For the tricks and wiles of the snake  
Your servant reveals the secret to you, my Lord.  
Do not keep faith with the Cobra;  
In the end you will be in vain.'

'O, my lord, ruler whose every command is obeyed,  
Your servant only wishes to remind you to take care.  
Once disaster has already struck  
To repent too late will be in vain.'

'Because you, my Lord, are a ruler wearing a crown  
Whereas your servant is a slave beneath the throne  
He does not want to disobey your words;  
Whatever wish you may utter is his command.'

When the Frog-King heard the words  
That were spoken by his minister, the vizier,  
He felt faint and his heart fluttered,  
As he thought: 'My minister is right to speak as he does.'

'Because I am a king  
I am in duty bound to establish consensus over all matters of state.  
It is not proper that I grant special favors to the Cobra;  
Ultimately I will only be harmed.'

After he had regained his composure  
His Highness spoke in a soft voice:  
'Erh, young Cobra, mighty war-like paladin,  
I fear I may become the victim of some trick.'

[f.5r]  
'Because the Almighty Creator has willed it so,  
The frog is the food of the snake.  
I feel terrified and my heart is pounding.  
We are so afraid we may be deceived.'

When the Cobra heard what he said  
He bowed the head and made obeisance.



In a soft voice he uttered the words:

‘I beg for your forgiveness, my sovereign king.’

‘Please do not listen to the words of your vizier;

I have no such a kind of intention.

The reason that I have come here is

That I wish to submit myself to you’

‘Cast off from all feelings and considerations

That your slave may want to deceive you, my Lord.

Your slave fear being stricken by the curse

Of God, our King, the Well-Wisher.’

‘Your slave has set his hopes, that are as high as a mountain,

On you, O lord, most august of rulers.

On your lap, my Lord, I want to take refuge.

Your every wish will be my command.’

‘Your slave does not speak with two tongues

Or wish to deceive Your Highness,

Because you, O lord, are a king enthroned in majesty

Whereas he is just a slave under the soles of your feet.’

‘Your slave’s deepest wish is that he may  
All his life until his dying day  
Submit himself to you, O lord,  
And faithfully carry out your commands.’

[f.5v]

He changed his mind, that noble frog:  
True were the words spoken by the Cobra, that war-like paladin.  
The vizier of his was really doing all he could to trick him,  
Wanting to find fault with the snake.

His majesty was furious and spoke:  
‘Hey, you, vizier, you, old minister!  
Don’t you dare to put up all this pretence  
And find fault with the young Cobra, that war-like paladin.’

‘I will no longer listen to your advice;  
You all are subjects and subordinate.  
Don’t you make too many injections,  
Or I will dismiss you from the hall.’

The old minister was terrified  
When he heard the words of that accomplished king.

His heart was filled with deep melancholy.  
Thereupon he left the kings private quarters by the gate.

He wanted to go back to his own house,  
Feeling upset, indescribably.  
Moreover he had been dismissed from office;  
The more he thought of it the more terrified he was.

When he reached the open space surrounding the hall  
He met a toad who was a gallant man to behold,  
Moreover he had spikes on his back like a moustache,  
And walked with a swaggering gait.

He was a minister who was old ass well as clever,  
His body was covered all over with ulcers.  
In strength and daring none was his equal,  
He was a courageous war-chief of Pasai descent.

[f.6r]

Addressing him the war-chief said:  
‘Whiter are you going, venerable sir?  
You look as if you are a hurry and speak not a word.  
What is it that upsets you so?’

‘Whiter, sir, do you want to go,  
Having been on your way since early morning.  
You seem unable to make out any longer where to go;  
What is it that you wish to obtain.

When he drew near the vizier was terrified;  
it was as if he was coming up close to him.  
‘You, my brother, who are wise and accomplished,  
Pray, do not enter the kingdom.’

‘Your servant has already incurred the wrath  
of His Majesty, that most illustrious ruler.  
Your servant had hardly uttered a few words  
Or he was already showered with abuse by him.’

When the ulcerated toad heard him speak these words  
Fear filled his heart and all strength drained from his limbs:  
‘If that is what they say about His Highness  
We, too, are afraid to present Ourselves before him.’

‘As for the intention with which We Ourselves,  
Wished to present Ourselves to His Royal Highness,

It was to hear the king humble himself  
Before the Cobra, that thieving snake.'

'Because the king is applying coercion  
And sending his subjects to the poisonous Cobra.  
If they are continually eaten by the Cobra,  
The kingdom will ultimately be destroyed.'

[f.6v]

'What we wanted to do, while resigning ourselves to God's Will,  
Was to give the king wisdom,  
So that his dignity would be all the more enduring;  
But what's the use of this, if he refuses to listen?'

'What will happen if all is to no avail?  
The Cobra is expert at deceiving people.  
Because of the trouble he will create,  
The entire kingdom will certainly perish.'

'What use it is it now to speak of our wishes,  
This king does not want to listen to what is said.  
If we protest too much to him  
In the end we will be reviled.'

‘His Majesty does not give a single thought to it all,  
A sign that the end of time is nigh.  
It is truly astonishing to hear  
That a snake and a frog have become friends.’

‘His Majesty alone is to be blamed  
For the ruin off all his subjects.  
If he does not wake up in time  
He, too, will suffer the same fate.’

‘It has already been ordained by the gods  
That the snake is his greatest enemy.  
Is it therefore not astonishing to us  
That a frog and a snake have reached agreement?’

‘My brother, think about what your servant says.  
Are the words he speaks right or not?  
If that is how Majesty behaves,  
We might as well return to our own homes.’

[f.7r]

The two of them thereupon hurried back  
And returned again to their own homes.

There they sat down in deep thoughts in silence,  
Thinking about the problem of their accomplished king.

Now the story is told  
Of the young Cobra, that war-like paladin.  
His joy was indescribable:  
His Majesty had agreed with everything he had said.

What added to his joy was that  
All the king's vizier had incurred his wrath.  
He carefully calculated and estimated:  
'How can I by my wiles cause a curse to strike.'

Thereupon the Cobra, that fine snake,  
Gently and softly spoke the words:  
'O, my Lord, ruler of the kingdom,  
Tell all your subjects to gather together here.'

'When your subjects have gathered together  
Let your slave teach you a lesson, my Lord.  
Your subjects will become so afraid  
That whatever service you want can be performed.'

‘Your every command is obeyed like at that of a king.

Let all your subjects be present here,

So that your slave can speak to them easily

And give orders to them that are very clear.’

‘When they see how things stand

And that your commands are faithfully carried out every day,

They will be overcome by fear and terror,

And will immediately do your bidding, my Lord.’

[f.7v]

‘Moreover all who are plotting against you will give up,

And all swashbucklers, too, will be overcome by fear.

All the more exalted will you be as a famous king,

For making a snake your personal mount.’

‘In former days there has never been a king

Who could sit resting his elbows on the of a cobra.

Your fame will be all the greater, my Lord.

All who see it will be awed by you.’

‘The reason why your slave speaks like this

Is that he wished to extol Your Highness’s fame,



So that it may be known by young and old  
That you, my Lord, are a descendant of venerable kings.'

'May all his signs be forgiven by Allah;  
Your slave has no intention to play tricks on you.  
He begs your forgiveness, most noble king.  
Wherever you go, he will follow you.'

'This slave of yours does not want to have a bad name.  
All he hopes is that he may be your Highness's slave,  
No matter whether he lives or dies, let that be clear,  
Even if he must die right there at the foot of your throne.'

When the Frog heard these words  
He felt greatly pleased with them.  
Immediately he called his ministers and war-chiefs,  
And ordered them to bring together all his subjects.

The Frog, that noble animal, also said:  
'Hey, you, my ministers and war-chiefs.  
The reason why I have given this order  
Is that I want to show them to the Cobra.'

[f.8r]

‘The reason why I have spoken thus  
Is that I follow the teachings of the Cobra.  
He knows more than one trick  
To bring improvement to my kingdom.’

All his war-chiefs and ministers were astonished.  
Thereupon they said among themselves:  
‘How stupid he is, our accomplished king  
To follow the teachings of the Cobra, that thieving snake.’

‘Why does His Majesty carry on like this  
And does he wish to put on such airs?  
He is not whit different from the snake  
And just follows whatever advice he gives.’

‘Now this is what he orders us to do:  
To bring together all his subjects  
So that he can show them off to the Cobra.  
Isn’t that, come to think of it, a wanton insult?’

‘The King is unaware that behind his deception  
Lurks a venomous poison.

One fine day his subjects will be wiped out.  
They are sure to be devoured by the snake one and all.'

'That Cobra is a snake with supernatural power.  
His looks are awe-inspiring, no doubt about that.  
His eyes are red like the glow of fire  
And the colour of his skin looks as if it has been painted.'

'As black as he looks,  
So evil is his behaviour, no doubt about that.  
He is very good at dissimulating;  
The entire kingdom will be deceived.'

[f.8v]

'But all regrets are now in vain;  
We are his subjects under the sole of his feet.  
This order cannot be refused by us  
Willy-nilly we are obliged to do as he says.'  
'If we fail to obey his command  
We are sure to be handed over to the Cobra;  
And what may very well happen to us then?  
We will suffer great torments and pain.'

When the ministers had spoken thus  
They gathered the populace together without delay.  
Great and small, are were summoned to come  
And present themselves before His Majesty.

When the entire populace had been gathered together  
In the presence of His Majesty, the illustrious King,  
The Cobra felt very pleased;  
He had not expected that there would be so many frogs.

Meanwhile he thought to himself:  
'If that's how things stand  
I will have a full stomach day by day  
And will never have to go hungry.'

'It's fine if I become his servant  
And just obey his every command;  
Later, when the right moment has come  
I will devour him as well.'

'Why should I worry any longer?  
My food has already been provided for.  
Two frogs per day is what I can eat;

What a comfortable situation!’

[f9.r]

‘I won’t have to tire myself going hither and thither

In search of food each and every day.

My food will just come to me by itself;

It will be of no use to tire myself.’

‘That stupid frog has already been deceived by me.

I will just do exactly as he tells me.

If that is how things will go,

My situation is a truly comfortable one.’

‘Because I am a snake,

A very great enemy of the frog,

Rather than eat him now I’d better preserve my disguise;

Whatever I say he listens to.’

‘He does whatever I tell him to do,

And disregards not even the least of my words.

I alone will profit from it,

Whereas he will be harmed.’

When the Cobra had made up his mind  
Doing obeisance and speaking in a soft voice he said to the king:  
'I beg your forgiveness, ruler whose every word is obeyed,  
Your subjects are so numerous that they are beyond description.'

'It is fitting indeed, that you, O lord, illustrious king,  
Should be surrounded by all these splendid regalia  
And that your subjects be numerous beyond description,  
Faithfully carrying out your commands every day.'

'You, O lord, were already a most famous king  
Yet your great station is now even more exalted.  
How astonished people will be to hear, my lord,  
That you have made a snake your personal mount.'

[f.9v]

'There has never been a king of another kingdom  
Who could rival you, O ruler whose every word is obeyed.  
Moreover you are wise of a generous disposition  
No one could be your match of compare with you.'

'widespread will be Your Illustrious Majesty's fame  
So that it overflows the whole world.

When people hear the tidings that are told of it  
They will bow their heads in obedience at the foot of your throne.’

When the Frog-King heard these words  
And noticed that the Cobra was clearly full of praise for him  
He felt greatly pleased  
And love that excellent Cobra all the more.

That frog, the noble king, thought to himself:  
‘True are the words spoken by the young Cobra that war-like paladin;  
My reputation will greatly be increased.  
How can I repay the love he has shown me?’

When he had thought thus  
His Majesty stood on the head of the Cobra.  
He looked to the right and looked to the left  
As, his face lit up with a kind smile, he said:

‘Hey, you, all my ministers and subjects,  
Don’t you neglect to carry out my commands,  
The reason that I have ordered you to come here  
Is that I wish to show you to the snake.’

[f.10r]

‘Know ye, all my subjects in the kingdom  
How things stand with the snake, that fine animal.  
As for the reason why he has come thither,  
It is that he greatly wishes to become my servant.’

‘Hey, you, my subjects one and all,  
Please, follow the orders hi gives.  
Whoever neglects to carry out his commands  
Will suffer harm.’

‘It is in fact my deepest wish  
To make the Cobra a minister  
So that he can reform my kingdom  
And look after all who live in my private apartments.’

‘Please follow all his orders.  
Don’t let me catch anyone grumbling.  
Whosoever does not obey his command  
Must not be sorry for himself if he loses his life.’

‘I have myself already examined  
How things stand with the Cobra, that greatly meritorious animal.



He does not intend to destroy us  
But he wishes to look after peacefully.’

‘Also, you my ministers, and war-chiefs,  
I impose on you another decree to carry out.  
You must prepare two frogs a day  
And take them to the Cobra.’

‘Thus always do your duty  
And do not be remiss a single day.  
If you do not obey my command  
I will extinguish you yourselves.’

[f.10v]

‘I have already sworn an oath of loyalty  
With the Cobra, that exalted snake.  
I do not like the secret formula to be changed;  
And do exactly what he tells me to.’  
‘That’s how it is, O my ministers;  
Don’t you give all sorts of comments.  
Carry out my every command each and every day  
In order that you may save your own skin.’

When His Majesty had finished speaking

His subjects one and all spoke in reply:

‘We beg for your forgiveness, Your Royal Highness,

But why does Your Highness act like this?’

‘What are your considerations, O ruler whose every command is obeyed,

For imposing these orders on your slaves?

Your subjects have not committed any wrongdoing,

And yet they are made food for the Cobra.’

‘My lord, not once have you given a thought

To what it really is that you are doing thus.

If your subjects have all been eaten,

How will things subsequently go with the kingdom?’

‘We, your subjects, all humbly would like to ask one question

To the household attendants of Your Majesty, God’s Vicegerent on earth:

‘How come His Royal Highness has lost his wits

And shows such great deference to a snake?’

‘Since you, O lord, ruler whose every command is obeyed,

Have always been in charge of the kingdom,

My lord, don’t you perchance know

The story of the Cobra, that war-like paladin?’

[f.11r]

‘We beg your forgiveness, O lord, illustrious king,  
Since the beginning of times it has been ordained by Deity  
That the snake shall be the manifest enemy of the frog,  
Yet you, O lord, are in agreement with him.’

‘You are not in the least aware, O lord,  
That by listening to the snake’s words you are letting yourself be deceived.  
When all your subjects have been eaten to the last frog  
You will also be devoured, O lord.’

‘O lord, illustrious king,  
Your subjects are all your humble slaves.  
Ho could they disobey your commands;  
God’s will has so ordained.’

‘To the Cobra we have been handed over  
We, your subjects, will become his food.  
It is God’s will that we are asked to sacrifice ourselves.  
We entrust ourselves to the Deity.’

When the Frog, that noble animal, heard  
What his subjects and the rank and file said  
He bowed the head, that noble king, and thought:  
'They are in a way right speak as they do.'

'What my subjects say is right in a way.  
In a way it is I who causing problems.  
By befriending a treacherous snake  
I will in the end be deceived.'

But the again he thought to himself:  
'How could the Cobra do a thing like that.  
How shows such a great deference to me;  
He will take excellent care of the kingdom.'

[f.11v]

'He shows such a great deference to me,  
And carries out my orders each and every day.  
How could he do a thing like that to me,  
Since is he a holy pundit of great wisdom.'

Well then, after thinking thus for a while  
His Majesty replied angrily

Saying to his subjects:

‘You mark my words, all of you!’

‘I don’t care what you have to say,  
Clever as you are at feigning sincerity.  
What I think in my heart is that actually  
You are just jealous of him, and that is all.’

‘It is because I have already granted  
The Cobra the right to rule my kingdom for me,  
And you are feeling unhappy about it,  
That you are putting pressure on me.’

‘But don’t you think that, whether you are high or low,  
Your speaking out against him will have the power  
To make me take disastrous step  
Of chasing away the snake, that gallant young man.’

‘Don’t you have wrong ideas in your head,  
I will not later prove to have been tricked.  
To act as you advise me to do is far from my nature.  
How ashamed would I then be before the Deity.’

‘I would very ashamed, indeed,  
Were I to go back on the oath I have sworn to the Cobra.  
My name has always been greatly pleased;  
What a humiliation it would be if I incurred censure.’

[f.12r]

‘I am a king who seated on a throne,  
No way will I go back on my words.  
You there, just do as you are told  
So long as I do not get a bad name.’

‘Whosoever among you has nerve  
To transgress my commands,  
He will be the first to be handed over by me  
To the Cobra to be eaten by him.’

When the Cobra heard these words  
And noticed that His majesty was full of praise for him,  
He felt greatly pleased  
And showed all the more deference to the king,

As, speaking in a soft voice, he said:  
‘O my brothers, dear frogs, listen to me,

Please do not think of your servant  
As a normal snake just like any other,'

'This useless servant and insignificant slave  
Has strayed into quarters under the palace,  
Begging for the favour of his lord and master  
That he will pick him up for whatever he is worth.'

'The reason he speaks these words  
Is that he desires to add lustre to the reputation of His Royal Highness  
Who all around the world is without a match,  
Even compared to other rulers.'

'O, gentlemen, my brothers, listen to me,  
Shed all your suspicion and mistrust.  
Your servant does not want to deceive you  
Or bring your kingdom to ruin.'

[f.12v]

'It is not the intention of your servant  
To commit treason against His Majesty's rule.  
If what they say was indeed true,  
Your servant would fear the Deity.'

‘However, everything has now been decided  
And His Majesty, too, has laid down the law.  
Two frogs must be provided without fail  
To become food for your humble servant.’

‘Gentlemen, please do not get angry with your servant,  
These words of his are not just empty talk.  
These are the orders of His Majesty himself.  
Don’t contravene his instructions and commands.’

Having spoken thus, the Cobra said  
As he bowed the head and did obeisance to His Majesty:  
‘I beg your forgiveness, Your Illustrious Highness,  
I am merely your slave at the foot of your coffin.’

‘How fitting it is that you, O lord, ruler of the kingdom  
Should have so many subjects that it is beyond description.  
Your servant feels greatly terrified  
At the sight of your troops, O accomplished king.’

These words will not be spun out by this beggar,  
How will keep brief the tale he has to tell.



Now the story is told of that brutish frog  
Who made the Cobra his personal mount.

Thus day in day out  
The snake was given two frogs.  
The more senior frogs fled to the last animal,  
Unwilling to stay in the kingdom.

[f.13r]  
They fled for safety in all directions  
Each trying its luck in its own way.  
When bound to rise they made their way up  
When bound to sink they went down.

Thus they fled for safety each in his own way,  
Some hid themselves in the wells  
Others concealed themselves in the forest full of thrones,  
Afraid of being eaten by the thieving Cobra.  
This prelude is finished, now the story comes up  
Of how the Frog behaved himself in a most foul way.  
He felt no shame before the Deity  
And just did whatever he pleased.

For a number of days  
The Frog kept doing what he pleased.  
Each day he mounted the Cobra  
And rode hither and thither to display glory.

How puffed up with pride was the Frog  
As he rode on the young Cobra, that war-like paladin.  
Whatever he had requested was provided  
He cared not the least bit for his subjects.

Then it happened one fine day  
That the thievish snake spoke to the King:  
'I beg your forgiveness, O lord, ruler of the realm,  
But there is something I want to say to you.'

His Majesty asked him: 'What is it, then,  
That you want to say, O Cobra, my teacher.  
Do not hide any wish you may have from me.  
Speak up all the same so that we know where we stand.'

[f.13v]

'If your request is to Our liking  
We are willing to do as you say.

Come on, Cobra, excellent animal,  
Whatever you have to say, let it be known.

When the Cobra, that accomplished animal, heard these words;  
He feigned doing obeisance while he said:  
'I beg your forgiveness for saying so, ruler of the kingdom,  
But your servant is very hungry.'

'I beg forgiveness, ruler whose command is obeyed,  
Bowed down at your feet, O Royal Highness, lustre of the kingdom,  
But such victuals as you have graciously granted, o lord,  
Are not enough to feed your servant.'

'I beg your forgiveness, illustrious ruler whose every command is obeyed,  
But if your servant may make a request,  
It is that he be given four frogs  
So that he may eat them.'

When the king that accomplished animal, heard  
What the Cobra had to say to him,  
His Highness spoke with a kind face:  
'Don't make such a fuss about all this.'

‘As for the request you have made,  
How could I refuse to grant it.  
Not to mention asking for four frogs,  
We would even grant you ten.’

The Cobra felt more and more pleased  
His face lit up with a kind smile;  
Whatever request he made was granted without exception;  
He had in mind to do more evil.

[f.14r]

‘I want to devour the subjects of the Frog.  
I will finish the entire population of his kingdom.  
Then I will eat that damned Frog,  
That is the finale I’ll perform.’

That’s how things stood with that thieving snake,  
Every day he made a fool of the Frog.  
Before a few days he passed  
His subjects had decreased in numbers by half the kingdom.

The Frog was not in the least aware  
That his subjects were being given hell by the Cobra.

All he wanted was to ride around  
On the head of the Cobra, that war-like paladin.

Like a madman he rode hither and thither  
Bent on showing off what a great king he was.  
Because of the foolish things which he did  
His subjects were all deceived.

Finally, had come the hour ordained by the All-Sufficing,  
As it stood written on the forehead of the wicked Frog.  
He alone had caused the disaster to strike;  
All the subjects in his kingdom had to suffer for it.

Well then, after a few days had gone by,  
The thieving Cobra again presented himself before the king.  
'I beg your forgiveness, O lord, ruler of the kingdom,  
But the victuals you give me do not suffice.'

'if you have mercy, illustrious ruler,  
Your servant would like to make a request at the foot of your throne.  
Please, graciously grant Us, O lord, an increase  
To ten frogs per day as food.'

[f.14v]

‘The reason why your servant says this  
Is that his work is a heavy burden to carry.  
Your servant has to work himself to death to carry out your commands;  
Hardly has he eaten till full or he is hungry again.’

‘My lord, do not be mistrustful.  
I assure you that your servant has not made up what he says.  
You only know too well, Your Royal Highness,  
How things stand with me, your insignificant servant.’

As soon as he heard what the Cobra had to say  
His Majesty took more and more pity on him.  
‘If that is all you want to ask me for,  
Well then, I will give you as many frogs as you need.’

‘Cobra, dear friend, do not worry and fret,  
I am not making empty promises to you.  
If I were to let you pine away,  
wouldn’t I get a bad reputation?’

‘I will grant you all that you request  
Even if it would be twenty frogs a day.

Your love for me is beyond description

It is on me alone to satisfy your needs.'

When the Cobra had heard what he said

He felt all the more pleased.

He felt the energy return to all his limbs

Because all he had wished had been granted to him.

He made obeisance to the king, the Cobra, that gallant young man,

While bowing down his head until it touched the ground.

'I beg your forgiveness, O lord, lustre of the palace,

Whose prestige on the royal dais is ever increasing.'

[f.15r]

'The flow of your bounty, O lord, is inexhaustible,

As you bestow your favour upon this lowly and destitute servant.

How and in what form could he ever hope to repay

The favour bestowed on him by God's vicegerent on earth?'

His Majesty was incredibly pleased

To hear the words of the Cobra, that clever trickster.

He felt ever more fond of and intimate with him;

The Cobra had captured his acting heart.

Thus His Majesty conducted himself day by day,  
Indulging the Cobra, that fine animal, in everything.  
That his subjects had all gone to the last frog  
Did not terrify him in the least.

His Majesty was unaware  
That he had been made a fool of.  
Like a madman he raced around on the back of the snake,  
While all his subjects in the kingdom were being eaten to the last man.

He gave no thought, that beloved king,  
To the fact that his kingdom would be entirely destroyed.  
By allowing himself to be deceived by the wicked Cobra  
He, too, would ultimately waste away.

He gave not the least thought to the fact  
That his subjects had disappeared from his sight.  
Each day he did just as he pleased,  
Thus, did things stand with that brutish Frog.

Well then, after some time had passed,  
One of his ministers came to present himself to the king.  
Conducting himself as decorously as he could



He softly and gently spoke to him:

[f.15v]

‘I beg forgiveness, ruler of the realm,  
Your servant has come to bring you word  
That all the subjects in your kingdom have been used up  
And that many have also fled.’

‘Each in their own way they have fled to safety  
Running away in all directions,  
Utterly terrified of the Cobra,  
And afraid that he will devour them.’

‘This is the reason your servant has come;  
He wishes to inform you, ruler of the realm,  
How things will presently stand with the kingdom:  
Your subjects have all fled to the last frog.’

‘I beg your forgiveness, O radiant gem,  
What are your orders, ruler of the realm.  
Where do we have to look for the frogs  
That we have to give to the Cobra, that fine animal.’

As soon as His Majesty had heard these words,  
He felt faint at heart and became ever more melancholy.  
His smiling face became darkened by care:  
His own minister looked down on him!  
Then, in there mere twinkling of an eye,  
Completely gone they were from his mind,  
The delights and pleasures he had always indulged in;  
Only sombre thoughts now filled his mind.

Only now did it become visible in all clarity  
And did the full picture form in His Majesty's mind:  
'It is because I did not wish to listen to advice  
That I now have a bad name.'

[f.16r]

His Majesty spoke, his radiant face looking pale:  
'O, dear uncle Prime Minister, tell me please,  
Isn't there someone left in the kingdom  
Whom I could give to the Cobra, that fine animal?'

'I have already given him my full promise,  
And do not want to treat him badly with his food.  
If I go back on my word,

I too will presently be devoured.'

'therefore, listen, my dear minister,  
Please be so kind as to go hither and thither.  
Possibly there are still some frogs in the land;  
Should you find any, please bring them here.'

His minister did obeisance to him as he spoke:  
'I beg your forgiveness, O lord, crowned ruler,  
But your servant is not lying when he says  
That he has already looked for them everywhere.'

'I beg your forgiveness, O ruler of the realm,  
Did your servant not tell you to take heed  
And not to befriend that thieving snake;  
Now you yourself have been deceived by him.'

'How many old ministers haven't already  
Petitioned Your Majesty, saying:  
It is no problem if you break your oath of loyalty to the snake,  
So long as you do not get a bad deal, my lord.'

‘Whereas all their petitions were turned down by you  
Whatever the Cobra said was law unto you.  
Now only has repentance come,  
But to repent too late is in vain.’

[f.16v]

‘Whither could you flee for safety, O lord,  
Looking for a way out to escape?  
It has already been ordained by the Creator of the Seas,  
Passed on you by Him, O my lord.’

‘How could one gainsay one’s lot,  
Is stands written by the deity since the beginning of times.  
Because you, O lord, have refused to listen,  
You are now dismissed from your throne.’

‘Throne and audience-hall you’d better forget, lord,  
Delights can there no more be had.  
Only death is waiting there for you,  
That is something that cannot be averted.’

‘You alone are to blame, O my lord,  
We, your subjects, had to suffer the consequences.

Being eaten by the Cobra without let-up;  
The kingdom was also destroyed.'

'Did not your servant previously beg you,  
O, my lord, whose every command I obey,  
Not to befriend the deceiving snake;  
Some day you would be deceived by him.'

As soon as His Majesty heard these words  
And taken note that his minister had spoken quite right  
His limbs went limp and began to tremble,  
Tears trickled down his cheeks.

He breathed in and breathed out,  
His thoughts full of apprehension:  
'Impossible that I escape my fate;  
I will surely die flayed alive.'

[f.17r]

'How unfortunate is the lot apportioned to me!  
Whom could I blame for what has happened?  
It is I alone who has brought all this about,  
But my subjects have had suffer the pain.'

‘I was unaware of what was going on,  
That all my subjects were being eaten to the last man.  
Because I listened to the treacherous words of the snake,  
What will be my fate on the Day of Judgment?’

While, His Majesty was brooding thus,  
The Cobra, that war-like paladin, came in and presented himself to the king.  
Bowing down his head under his foot soles  
He spoke softly while doing obeisance:

‘I beg your forgiveness, ruler of the realm,  
Your servant is so hungry that is unbearable.  
The food of your servant has not yet appeared;  
It has not been given to Us yet.’

‘Now what do you think to do about it, my lord?  
My empty stomach really feels hungry.  
My body feels utterly tired and exhausted,  
Whatever work I try to do is too much for me.’

When His Majesty had heard these words,  
His radiant face was darkened by care.

He was ever more pressed by melancholy,  
Sunk in deep thought, looking up and down.

The Cobra, that thieving animal, now knew  
That all frogs to the last one had fled.  
'Now doesn't the kingdom look deserted?  
I may now give in to my royal pride.'

[f.17v]

Thereupon the Cobra said to the king  
Clearly behaving in a rude manner:  
'Hey, you there, you frog, you lowly animal!  
What is the advice you have to give Us.'

'Now where is that food of mine!  
Why is it not given to me right now?  
If my food is not given to me,  
I will next eat you up, that's for sure!'  
'For long have I been your servant,  
And have obeyed whatever orders you gave.  
I am fed up with being your personal mount;  
And sick and tired of your arrogance.'

‘You damned, accursed and ill-omened frog,  
I am tired of carrying you around on my back.  
So tired am I of it that I cannot put it into words.  
Now let me spell out to you what I really think.’

‘You already think the world of yourself  
Because I have been made your personal mount  
And then you have the nerve to boast and brag,  
Carelessly treading on my head.’

‘What is so illustrious about those feet of yours, anyway,  
Wrinkled as they are, like the skin of a ghost?  
You are as ugly to look at as is a ghost,  
And then you have the nerve to tread me on the head.’

‘With all those horrible things you have done  
I have patiently put up with,  
Even allowing you to tread on my head,  
So that I could eat your subjects.’

[f.18r]

‘Hey, you there, you stupid dammed frog.  
Why do you sit pondering there any longer?



Too long have you been able to do exactly as you pleased,  
Without let-up for even a moment.'

'You were not in the least aware  
That I belong to the species of the snakes,  
One of your greatest enemies,  
And would one fine day coil around you.'

'Now why do you sit pondering there any longer?  
You cannot escape me, frog, that's for sure.  
Where you could flee for safety anymore?  
This time I will guzzle you up and your minister.'

'There are still the two of you remaining,  
So, there is enough food for me to eat.  
No more will I have to mope and fret  
About having to address you as 'Your Highness'.'

'I know all about your ancestry;  
From the spawn of frogs, that's how you were born.  
In a stagnant pool, that's where you belong.  
That's why you are so puffed-up with pride.'

‘Whose descendant you are is hard to say.  
Scattered eggs, that’s where you come from.  
In moats and ditches, that’s where you dwell.  
That’s why you look as ugly as you do.’

‘When the eggs break and are ripe  
The frogs are scattered about hither and thither  
And some run for the safety of a well.  
Damned frog, I don’t like you one bit!’

[f.18v]

‘Hey you, utterly stupid frog,  
What are you brooding about?  
What do you have to say any longer?  
Whatever it is, I won’t give a damn.’

‘I am already quite fed up, so I feel,  
With having been made your servant.  
Now the moment has come for the times to change.  
Methinks I can claim my right any time I please.’

‘Don’t you have all sorts of thoughts any longer.  
I will not let you escape, frog, that’s for sure!

I have already guzzled up your subjects to the last frog.

Now I will give it to you.'

As soon as the Frog had heard what he said

His heart began to pound and he almost fainted.

Speaking softly and gently he uttered the words:

'Please, good Cobra, spare Our life.'

The Cobra answered him rudely:

'I cannot spare your life, you frog!

It has already been ordained and stands written by God's decree,

That you will become my food.'

'Anyway, don't waste your breath any longer.

What you have to say will be of absolutely no avail.

My stomach is so hungry it is unbearable.

I want to eat you now, right away.'

No sooner had the Cobra given this answer

Than he drew near and opened his mouth.

Thereupon he gobbled up both animals,

The Frog-King and his minister.

[f.19r]

The Poem of the Cobra has come to its end.  
This beggar wrote it looking up and down,  
As his head was reeling and his breast was aching,  
Hoping that perhaps it might bring benefit.

You, dear sirs, all my brothers,  
When someone reads out this poem,  
This beggar hopes that on hearing it  
You gentlemen will draw a lesson from it.

The reason this beggar says this to you-  
And hopefully you will not get angry at him-  
Is that it is best to repent at an early moment;  
If one repents too late, is it in vain.

Your servant is a lowly beggar.  
He hopes that you, sirs, who read out this poem  
Will perhaps understand the parable this beggar tells;  
Don't you be lacking in thought, dear sirs

My God bless our Prophet, Lord Muhammad,  
The poem of the Cobra has come to its end, indeed.

Whoever reads it out with a mindful spirit  
Will later one day obtain his intercession.